

Subject: Welcome our new Interim Conference Minister - Randy Hyvonen!

From: Southeast Conference UCC (clwaldron@secucc.org)

To: michaelstroud@bellsouth.net;

Date: Thursday, July 18, 2013 9:40 AM

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. Don't forget to add tdowns@secucc.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



FEATURE FOCUS

New Interim Conference Minister Called!

The Board of Directors has called Rev. Randall Hyvonen to serve as Interim Conference Minister. Randy is an "old hand" at conference ministry, having served 8 years in the Pacific Northwest Conference, followed by 6 years in Montana-Northern Wyoming, from which he retired in 2011. Prior to that, he served in local church and association ministry since ordination in 1973. The Board was impressed with Randy's experience, his calm demeanor, and his approach to ministry. He brings specific experience in the areas of managing transitions within conferences, guidance of leadership and ministerial development programs, and management of conference finances. We think he will provide valuable support and leadership of conference staff, as well as local church ministers.

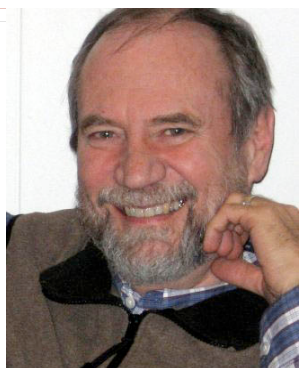
Randy is a native of Montana and has spent most of his life in the Midwest and Northwest, except for time at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville. He and his wife, Karen, will settle into temporary quarters in Atlanta after celebrating the 95th birthday of Karen's father in Seattle. Randy will start work in the Conference on July 24. (Actually, he's already meeting with staff and handling some urgent business by telephone.) He already has plans to visit our new church start in Pensacola his first weekend "on the job."

Please join with the Board and me in welcoming Randy to the diversity, charm, and energy of the Southeast Conference.

A word from Randy Hyvonen, our new Interim Conference Minister



I'm very pleased to be called to serve as your interim Conference Minister until you call a Designated Conference Minister. Having attended Vanderbilt Divinity School



from 1969-1973, I feel that in coming to serve among you I am also reconnecting with parts of my own faith journey (and family history - the first of our 3 children was born in Nashville). And I feel additional ties with you: your previous Conference Minister, the late Roger Knight, succeeded me as the pastor of the inner city church I served for 10 years in Cleveland, then retired to Uplands, where Karen and I have additional friends we've come to know over my years of ministry in the wider UCC.

I hope that my experience of diverse ministries over large geographies will be beneficial for you as we "bridge the gap" together. And I trust that as we work together, God will call us not only to uphold all that has been good about your history but also to grow in new ways!

-- Randy

NEW Conference Website!

New Website and Connection Program

What's New?

The Southeast Conference Website has a new design, easy access to news and events, and resizes to fit your screen, whether you are using a phone, iPad, tablet, or laptop. We'd like to make this even more interactive for churches in the Conference! Congregations can now appoint members to be "Social Networking Partners" with the ability to post news, stories, and event information directly to the website to promote what your community is doing and connect with other SEC congregations!

How does your church get connected?

Contact Chris Lyman Waldron at clwaldron@secucc.org or you can call the Conference Office. You'll be able to sign up for training on how to use these exciting new tools.

General Synod Recap Stories from our delegates

Another UCC First... New Environmental Resolution

by Debbie Spearman

Passed by General Synod 29 delegates on Monday July 1st, 2013 at the Long Beach Convention Center was a resolution that calls for the UCC to divest of any Fossil Fuel companies in it's investment funds. This resolution is the "first of it's kind" by any national

CELEBRATION



David Sigmund and Jay Greaves, were married at General Synod 29 in Long Beach, California! The wedding was officiated by Rev. Susannah Davis from Kirkwood UCC and activist Rev. Mel White. [Click here to read more from our website.](#)

CONFERENCE NEWS

News from the Conference and Associations

Conference Minister Search Report

Southeast Conference Family,

On behalf of the Conference Board and Search Committee, I thank you for your presence, input, and support expressed at our annual meeting in mid-June. Together, we experienced wonderful times of fellowship, worship, ideas sharing, and story-telling. To follow-up on those conversations and to include those who were not able to

faith community. This resolution calls for divestment by June 2018, which directly affects the strategies of our UCC United Church funds and the Pension Board. Both entities supported the resolution.

[Click here](#) to read more

Resolution responds to violence in Honduras

By Carrole Moss

A resolution calling for a response to "drug related gang violence in Honduras" was submitted to this General Synod by the Maine conference. The Maine Conference has worked in partnership for over a decade with our Honduran brothers and sisters in support of peace and justice.

The Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church encourages the churches of the United Church of Christ to call on out governmental leaders to reassess and recreate our U. S. Foreign policy to address the situation of human rights violations, illegal drug trafficking and violence that impact the quality of life for all those involved.

[Click here](#) to read more

General Synod recognizes the need of care for veterans

by Jennifer Spears

The proposed resolution "Compassionate Care and Healing Ministry to our Veterans" drew quite a crowd during the Educational Intensive on Friday, June 28th. Many of the members of this committee were veterans, like myself. The Rev. Stephen Boyd of the Chaplain's Office at the national level spoke at length about what the resolution would actually do, and that it had mainly in response to the huge loss of veterans from church life after they returned home from overseas tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He emphasized that, of the veterans who were regular churchgoers before they went out on combat tours, 85 percent did not return to church when they arrived home.

[Click here](#) to read more

Restructuring Conference Boundaries or Hymn Singing...During Committee Meeting?

By Leah Lyman Waldron

I've had the privilege of serving as a delegate on the

attend, I would like to share information about where we are in the Designated Conference Minister search process.

As we discussed at annual meeting, the Search Committee has been charged with identifying, vetting, and recommending to the Conference a Designated Conference Minister.

The Search Committee has been prayerfully and diligently working on the conference's behalf since January 2013. Over the last several months, we have developed a job description and a conference profile, and have posted the position on the UCC search list. Additionally, as I write this, several members of the committee are at the 29th UCC General Synod and representing the conference on this matter.

The job description, conference profile, and an audio file of our welcoming poem are available at the [SECUCC website by clicking here.](#)

The Search Committee is now in the process of developing criteria statements and interview questions. We would love to receive your input on this process! To provide input, simply complete and submit by July 31 [the related questionnaire by clicking here.](#) Your input will be faithfully compiled, considered, and incorporated by the committee.

We anticipate receiving candidate applications and ministry profiles throughout the summer, interviewing and vetting candidates throughout the fall, and recommending a Designated Conference Minister to the conference in the winter.

Finally, we covet your prayers during this time and invite all our congregations to participate together in "Second Sunday Search" moments. These are moments when congregations spend a few minutes the second Sunday of each month beginning July 14 to intentionally pray for the conference and/or include a conference-minded reading, meditation, or other expression of worship. The purpose of this is to remind us all that we are one in Christ and connected in ministry with each other through our conference relationships. Just imagine what a wonderful experience and outcome we can have in this process with our FULL conference actively engaging and inviting God into it! I hope that you will access related worship materials the Search Committee has developed by [clicking here](#) and join us in being Church together in this worship and discernment.

If you have questions about the Search or want to recommend a potential candidate to us, please feel free to [email me at vol_coordinator@bellsouth.net](#).

Thank you for your time, your prayers, and your love of our beloved church.

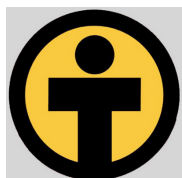
**Blessings & Peace,
Jennifer Austin
Search Committee Chair**

committee tasked with considering General Synod Resolution #11, "Restructuring Conference Boundaries." The title is a bit misleading, as the resolution's purpose is really to encourage Conferences to have vigorous conversation about how to revitalize Conferences to better fulfill their missions and ministries as part of Christ's body in the UCC. Avenues for revitalization include sharing resources among Conferences, "out of the box" thinking about partnerships with other Conferences and their covenant partners (and even other denominations), and potentially reconfiguring Conference boundaries, all drawing on the resources and facilitative ability of the National Setting. Per the Constitution of the UCC, any reconfiguration of Conference boundaries would have to begin at the Conference level and later be approved by a future General Synod.

[Click here](#) to read more

[For more stories about the 29th General Synod click here.](#)

Disaster Preparedness Webinar



Are you ready if disaster strikes your community?

Join the Emergency Response Team of Church World Service (CWS) on Tuesday, August 6, at 2 p.m. EST for "Disaster Preparedness," a webinar that will discuss important details often overlooked while preparing for an emergency.

The Emergency Response Specialists will discuss what to expect when disaster strikes. Individuals and families are often not aware of the important steps during relief and recovery, leaving many hopeless in the wake of a disaster. For this reason it is important to know where to turn in an emergency. From Disaster Case Management (DCM) to Emotional and Spiritual Care, this webinar will inform you of the important details to consider, keeping you from becoming a disaster "victim."

[Click here to register](#)

Hope you can join us!



Reflection on China and Theological Education by Rev. Sarah Kim

Written in Chinese, China literally means the "Middle Land." The country does occupy a huge portion of the land in the middle of the globe with its 1.3 billion large population. That's four times the U.S. population, and 20% of the world population.

Last May, I have had the privilege of visiting China, made possible by the Brown Grant (General Ministries, UCC) for a continuing education excursion that was attached to my trip to Korea, which I will discuss in my next report. I met our host Rev. Dr. Xiaoling Zhu (Global Ministries, UCC) in Beijing and traveled to Shanghai and Nanjing with ten members of the Asian Pacific Forum, a group of ecumenical church leaders from various locations in the U.S., who works with Asian partners on global ministries. Together we visited Yanjing Theological Seminary (Beijing), China Christian Council (Shanghai), and Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (Nanjing), to learn, share, and strengthen ties for collaborative work around theological education and church and social ministries.

[Click here to read more about theological education and China on the PATHWAYS website!](#)



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Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Capital Campaign News

Transform Your Life-Transform the World



UCC E-GIVING

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Emergency Response Specialist
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Is your church
interested in
Electronic Giving?
UCC's E-Giving is the
automated giving
program of the United
Church of Christ, designed to make it easy for givers
to give.



4 ways to give electronically:

Direct debit (ACH)
Credit/debit card
Online giving
Texting donations

**Contact Debbie Spearman for more information
on E-Giving** dspearman@secucc.org.



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